

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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UNCLAS DUBLIN 00495

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, EI
SUBJECT: LYNCH AND PEACE PEOPLE EXCHANGE SALVOS

REF: DUBLIN 0456

1. DURING THE PEACE PEOPLE DEMONSTRATION IN DUBLIN ON FEB 18 (REFTEL), PEACE LEADER BETTY WILLIAMS REPORTEDLY SAID THAT POLITICAL LEADERS IN THE SOUTH SHOULD THINK TWICE BEFORE COMMENTING ON THE NORTH. THEN, ACCORDING TO A NUMBER OF REPORTS, SHE ADDED: "THE STATEMENT FROM MR. LYNCH A FEW WEEKS AGO GAVE THE PROVISIONALS THE GO-AHEAD TO CONTINUE THEIR CAMPAIGN...POLITICIANS HERE SHOULD BE VERY CAREFUL BEFORE THEY OPEN THEIR MOUTHS ON NORTHERN IRELAND."

2. ON THE RADIO PROGRAM "THIS WEEK" (VENUE OF LYNCH'S JAN 8 INTERVIEW), PRIME MINISTER JACK LYNCH GAVE A STRONG AND ALMOST INDIGNANT REPLY: "I WOULD HOPE THAT MRS. WILLIAMS, AND THOSE ASSOCIATED WITH HER WOULD DO THEIR OWN JOB. THEY ARE SUPPOSED TO BE A PEACE MOVEMENT AND SHOULD UNCLASSIFIED

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NOT ENTER INTO CONTROVERSIAL POLITICS. I WOULD LIKE TO ASK HER SPECIFICALLY, IF SHE WANTS TO ENTER INTO THIS AREA, IN WHAT RESPECTS DOES SHE SAY THAT IN ANY WAY I HAVE HELPED THE IRA OR ENCOURAGED THE IRA IN THEIR CAMPAIGN? I DON'T THINK ANYONE WOULD BELIEVE THAT. I'M AFRAID SHE HAS BEEN TAKEN IN

BY SOME OF THE PROPAGANDA THAT HAS BEEN GENERATED FROM LONDON."

3. NOT TO BE OUTDONE, LATER IN THE SAME PROGRAM BUT FROM A DIFFERENT LOCATION, PEACE LEADER MAIREAD CORRIGAN WEIGHED IN STATING THAT SHE HAD NOT BEEN MISLED BY BRITISH PROPAGANDA AND DEFENDED HER RIGHT TO COMMENT ON HER OWN FUTURE AS AN INHABITANT OF NORTHERN IRELAND. SHE SAID THAT ALTHOUGH SHE GREATLY RESPECTED AND ADMIRERD MR. LYNCH, "IN HIS WAY" HE HAD GIVEN THE GREEN LIGHT TO THE PROVISIONALS TO CONTINUE THEIR CAMPAIGN. LYNCH HAD "PUT GREAT FEAR INTO THE PROTESTANT MAJORITY IN THE NORTH WHEN HE TALKED ABOUT BRITISH WL..UNTIL THE TWO COMMUNITIES COME TOGETHER ONE MUST NOT ADD TO THAT FEAR, OR ADD FUEL TO THE FIRE."

4. THE LYNCH FORCES THEN FELL BACK TO REGROUP AND INsofar AS NOTED HERE NO STATEMENTS WERE MADE ON MONDAY, HOWEVER, ON TUESDAY, ALL THE PAPERS CARRIED THE TEXT OF A LETTER FROM MRS. LYNCH STRONGLY CRITICIZING THE PEACE PEOPLE'S ATTACK ON HER HUSBAND: "I VERY MUCH ADMIRE THE EFFORTS OF THE PEACE PEOPLE TO BRING UNDERSTANDING, RECONCILIATION AND PEACE INTO THE TRAGIC SITUATION IN THE NORTH. I ATTENDED A PEACE MEETING IN THE MANSION HOUSE AT UNCLASSIFIED

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WHICH CIARAN MCKEOWN SPOKE. BUT FOR A PEACE LEADER TO SUGGEST THAT JACK LYNCH - THE LEADER OF THE LARGEST POLITICAL PARTY IN IRELAND, A PARTH WHOSE NORTHERN POLICY HAS ALWAYS BEEN BASED ON PEACE AND RECONCILIATION - COULD OR WOULD ENCOURAGE MURDEROUS VIOLENCE TO PROMOTE THE LEGITIMATE ASPIRATIONS OF THAT PARTY AND OF THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE IRISH PEOPLE IS CERTAINLY NOT ADVANCING THE CAUSE OF THE PEACE MOVEMENT ON THIS ISLAND."

5. THIS LATEST SALLY PROMPTED THE THIRD OF THE TRIO OF PEACE PEOPLE LEADERS, CIARAN MCKEOWN, TO GET INTO THE ACT. HE FIRST TRIED TO DAMP DOWN THE SLANGING MATCH AND EXPRESSED "REGRET" OVER THE PUBLIC FRACAS. THEN, LATER, HE ISSUED A STATEMENT INVITING MRS. LYNCH TO COME TO THE NORTH INFORMALLY TO "MEET A WIDER RANGE OF NORTHERN PEOPLE." HE CALLS MR. LYNCH "A MAN OF PEACE," BUT DEFENDS THE PEACE PEOPLE'S RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN CONTROVERSIAL POLITICS.

6. REVEREND IAN PAISLEY THEN SAID HIS ADVICE TO MRS. LYNCH WOULD BE TO "STAY AT HOME AND LOOK AFTER HER

HUSBAND."

7. COMMENT: AT THIS POINT IT SEEMS THE HOMETEAM SHOULD BE COMING TO BAT, BUT WE ARE NOT SURE WHAT INNING WE ARE IN. THIS REGRETTABLE EXCHANGE HAS NOT BEEN HELPFUL, AS APPARENTLY SOME ARE BEGINNING TO REALIZE. MCKEOWN'S STATEMENT SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN AN ATTEMPT AT MODERATION. THE PEACE PEOPLE HAVE, INCIDENTIALLY, PROMISED MORE AND BIGGER DUBLIN DEMONSTRATIONS IN THE NEAR FUTURE. CRITICIZING THE WIDELY POPULAR AND RESPECTED TAOISEACH JACK LYNCH IS NOT EXACTLY THE WAY TO INSURE A WARM WELCOME. SHANNON

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